

S. & H. [c. 1947]
Statement of Governor of South Carolina

It is always a distinct pleasure for me to endorse a program that will help any group of South Carolina citizens. But it is a far greater pleasure to lend support to a move that will benefit all the people of our State.

It is for this reason that I am supporting wholeheartedly the drive to get out a large vote in Saturday's referendum among flue-cured tobacco farmers. We all feel confident that if two-thirds of the tobacco growers voting approve the 10 cents per acre assessment to support a broad three-year foreign market protection and expansion program, the farmers will be sure of selling abroad. However, in order to carry weight in Washington and the capitals of foreign countries, flue-cured growers must turn out in large numbers for the referendum. The vote MUST be strong if we are to avoid a return to the prices of 1932. The vote MUST be strong if we are to continue to sell 40 per cent of our tobacco to other countries.

If we should lose our foreign market, the fair price we receive for our sales on the domestic market will drop because the extra 40 per cent, which now goes abroad, will be sold here.

You have read the endorsements of the program by the State Grange, the Clemson College Extension Service, and many other agricultural, business and professional groups. Why is everyone so concerned about our flue-cured export program? It is because every resident of the flue-cured belt is affected by the rise or fall of this market.

Just imagine what it would mean if the foreign sales of our tobacco were suddenly stopped. It would be just like a worker going up for his wages and finding that almost half the money he had earned was already taken out of his pay envelope. It is just as simple as that. Yes, and just as serious as that for the 200,000 flue-cured tobacco farmers in South Carolina and North Carolina whose life's earnings are tied up in "The Bright Gold Leaf".

This is not a vote to spend. This is a vote to protect. It is a vote to safeguard the \$200 an acre, or \$1,000 total, that every landlord, tenant and share-

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cropper averaged for his 1946 flue-cured crop.

The future of our flue-cured market MUST Be protected. I appeal to every flue-cured tobacco grower eligible to vote to cast his ballot Saturday -- for the protection of his foreign market, his family and his fellow-producers throughout the tobacco country.